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Magazine Articles Cited in KGB-Freeze Link

By Joanne Omang
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The White House, challenged yesterday to produce documentation for President Reagan's charge that Soviet agents are manipulating the U.S. nuclear freeze movement, produced a list that included two Reader's Digest articles as well as State Department reports.

One of the Reader's Digest articles, by senior editor John Barron and published in October, says the Soviet KGB intelligence agency "helped organize and inaugurate" the freeze campaign.

In an interview, Barron refused to identify what he said were "three intelligence and/or security services" that were his sources, but he added: "I have reason to believe that the president made very extensive inquiries, before he spoke, on the facts in that article."

Freeze advocates, meanwhile, were outraged by the charge, which Reagan made at his Thursday night news conference.

Reuben McCornack, Washington spokesman for the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, called it "a red herring" produced to divert public attention from the international arms race.

Morton Halperin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Center for National Security Studies, accused Reagan of "returning to the tactics of McCarthyism," referring to the virulent anticommunist campaign of the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R-Wis.) in the 1950s.

Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.), who cosponsored a call for a nuclear freeze with Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), said he would demand that Reagan produce the names of the agents. "I fought the communists in China when I was with the Navy," Hatfield said. "I fought them on the platforms in a debate on an ideological basis. I just haven't found one in the nuclear freeze movement."

In his press conference Thursday night, Reagan said the Soviet Union "saw an advantage in a peace movement built around the idea of a nuclear freeze." He added: "There is no question about foreign agents that were sent to help instigate and help create and keep such a movement going."

Reagan said there was "plenty of evidence. It's even been published by some of your [journalistic] fraternity."

He had charged in October that the freeze was "inspired by . . . some who want the weakening of America." But nearly 11 million voters in eight states and the District of Columbia endorsed ballot measures earlier this month calling for a bilateral weapons freeze despite strong administration opposition.

Briefing reporters yesterday, White House spokesman Larry Speakes listed "considerable U.S. government documentation" for the charge, beginning with two State Department "special reports" on Soviet "active measures" and two department "foreign affairs notes," one titled "World Peace Council: Instrument of Soviet Foreign Policy," and the other on the expulsion of Soviet representatives from foreign countries since 1970.

"Soviet efforts to exploit the well-motivated intentions of those in other nations who are seeking peace are well known," Speakes said.

He mentioned a House Intelligence Committee report of February, 1980, called "Soviet Covert Action," and then ticked off four magazine articles: the Readers' Digest pieces, a May article in Commentary and a June article in The American Spectator.

Asked if Reagan had read all the State Department material, Speakes responded, "He's certainly aware of it." He added, however, that he was "not sure" whether Reagan was familiar with all the magazine articles.

The book excerpt by Barron, a former Navy intelligence officer, describes "active measures campaigns" by the KGB "to make people support Soviet policy unwittingly by convincing them they are supporting something else."

"Today, the KGB is concentrating on one of the largest 'active measures' campaigns mounted since World War II. Its objective is to secure military superiority for the Soviet Union by persuading the United States to abandon new weapons systems," the article continues. "The name of the campaign is the nuclear freeze."

After the late Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev called for a freeze in February, 1981, Barron

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